

## Arizona Adopts Native American Language Teacher Certification Policy

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A new policy will enable certified Native language speakers to teach their Native languages in Arizona classrooms.

"These Native American languages are in danger of becoming extinct. It is imperative that we work to support Native American communities in their efforts to preserve their languages through the generations," said Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal in a press release.

Of the 22 tribal governments in the state, the Navajo Nation is already participating, and others are drafting proficiency assessments to take part.

The Native American Language Certification Policy was developed by the Arizona Department of Education and Native American tribes and was unanimously adopted by the State Board of Education.

"I'd like to thank the Department of Education and Superintendent Huppenthal for supporting Native American language programs and its traditional teachers," State Board member Jacob Moore said in the release. "This is a historical event that honors the recognition of Native American languages in our education system and will be well received by tribal nations and communities throughout the state."

The policy allows those with proficiency in their Native language, which will be verified by tribal assessments, to apply for a Native Language Teacher Certificate at the Arizona Department of Education. This will allow elders and other non-degreed language experts to teach native languages to students in Arizona schools.

"The new Native American Language Certification will help us preserve and maintain our language," said Kathy Kitcheyan, Apache language mentor teacher at San Carlos Unified School District, in the release. "I'd like to thank the Superintendent and State Board for having the Native American Advisory group and for moving this forward. This was a long time coming."

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/article/arizona-adopts-native-american-language-teacher-certification-policy-132383>